



Buzzwords ...

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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Buzzwords No 29 April 1991



"But do you ever take time to stop and smell the flowers?"



FROM THE PRESIDENT

The major topic of discussion at the Industry Planning Meeting held at Flock House in March was the future funding of our industry, "user pays", and its affect on disease inspection and control.

As concern was being expressed particularly by the Auckland and Waikato branches, we decided to invite to our meeting the presidents of both branches, and also Gavin White from Canterbury to give a more equal North/South balance.

The main concern voiced is the increase in cost to our industry caused by government policy. Our industry is facing poor crops in some areas and in general difficult economic times.

Your executive is aware of the hurts and difficulties being felt by many and is working towards an amiable solution.

The detail of the Industry Plan itself will be available hopefully as an addition to your next month's *Buzzwords*.

Dudley Ward, NBA President

SOME IMPORTANT DATES

Nominations for National Executive close at 5 pm on Tuesday 21 May. A nomination form is enclosed with this issue. This year's elections are for two representatives from the North Island and one from the South Island. The Executive is hoping that the keen interest members have shown in industry affairs during the last year will result in a number of beekeepers standing for election.

The voting papers (assuming there is an election) will be posted on Friday 31 May. They must be returned by Friday 21 June. They will be counted on the following Monday 24 June.

Remember that remits to Conference are due by 5 pm Friday 31 May.

BRANCH NEWS

The **Bay of Plenty** branch of the NBA will hold its AGM on 15 April at 7 pm at the Tauranga South Primary School, 900 Cameron Road, Tauranga. The inspection levy will be a central topic of discussion. All branch members are strongly urged to attend.

The **Southern North Island** branch will also be holding its AGM on 16 April at 10 am in the National Party Rooms, Bell Street, Wanganui. The branch would appreciate good attendance to ensure a useful, active programme for the following year results.

Northland branch has been using publicity effectively to highlight the dangers to our industry brought about through



"As the workhorse of the beekeepers' association, I say 'nay'!"

the withdrawal of government funding for the disease control service. A recent newspaper article quoted Bruce Stephenson, Northland branch president, and Derek Bettsworth, Whangarei MAF apicultural consultant. The main point raised related to the destruction of the 'clean green' reputation our honey enjoys if the loss of the service led to antibiotic drug feeding for disease control.

BEE STING BLOOD TESTS - FREE!

Members will now have received a letter from Dr Rohan Ameratunga of the Auckland University Medical School outlining his research project on bee sting allergies.

Included with that letter was a request for beekeepers to take part in a survey of "blocking antibody" levels by having a blood test at their local medical lab.

According to reports, what many beekeepers didn't realise was that the blood test was free. All you have to do is take

along the lab form which was included with Dr Ameratunga's letter.

This is a research project of particular relevance to beekeepers and their families, so please take part. According to past research on the subject, beekeeper's families are 50 times more likely to experience serious (anaphylactic) reactions than the general public.

DOING HIS BIT FOR NEW ZEALAND TOURISM

Congratulations are in order to Reg Clarke for having the foresight to advertise this year's Blenheim Conference in overseas beekeeping journals.

Reg is really on the ball. An article advertising our Conference appeared in the *Speedy Bee*, an American journal, in the January issue, and the conference doesn't even take place until July! Maybe we should nominate Reg for a New Zealand Tourism award...

DRUG FEEDING - THE BAY OF PLENTY RESPONDS

The February issue of *Buzzwords* made mention of "murmurings" over the feeding of drugs for BL control, and suggested that beekeepers affected by the disease in pollination areas give thought to the large majority of honey producers and the "clean green" image New Zealand honey projects.

This prompted a strong response from Peter Townsend, president of the **Bay of Plenty** branch. According to Peter, "whenever the subject of drug feeding has been mentioned at meetings or other gatherings of this branch, including last month's field day, there has been little doubt that opinion has been overwhelmingly opposed to drug feeding for BL control."

Peter tells us that at the March branch meeting a motion was passed unanimously opposing the use of drugs for BL control in New Zealand.

NEW ZEALAND BEE GENETIC IMPROVEMENT GROUP

This programme, which was first proposed in the Summer 1989 issue of *The New Zealand Beekeeper*, and was discussed at last year's conference, is now well underway. The programme is in the able hands of David Yanke, Peria, with administrative support from a committee of directors led by John Bassett, Te Kuiti. A limited liability company is being formed and the shareholding of 25 beekeepers is now fully subscribed.

David reports that initial stock from shareholders was of very good quality and performed well in tests for honey production and over-wintering. Twenty lines were selected in December with drones and virgins produced from each line. Apart from a few hiccups in drone maintenance, the



insemination programme conducted during the final two weeks in February went extremely well. David was assisted during the semen collection and inseminations by Helen Giacon of the DSIR and Cliff Van Eaton from Kerikeri.

According to David, these breeder queens, which have just been sent to shareholders, are a New Zealand beekeeping first. They're the first queens to be inseminated using the pooled semen homogenisation technique. The semen they carry will be a full and equal distribution of semen from bee stocks of all the contributors.

Well done, David and Co! Finally, after many years of wishing, a New Zealand-wide breeding programme is now underway.

RAZOR BLUNT - MAF TAURANGA APPOINTMENT

In the last issue of *Buzzwords* we reported that the 'Razor Gang' had struck MAF, and that so far the Tauranga apiary district had not been filled. Now, thanks to quick and determined action by the National Executive, BOP branch, and Murray Reid, the razor may have been blunted somewhat. We are happy to announce that Cliff Van Eaton has been appointed to the Tauranga position, effective 11 March.

Many beekeepers on both islands will remember Cliff from his time as apicultural advisory officer in Gore, and then Whangarei. Cliff was responsible for the first work on physiological queen quality and assisted in the formation of the New Zealand Queen Bee Producers Association. For the last few years, Cliff and his wife, Bonnie, have been living in Kerikeri where he was manager of Homestead Apiaries for two seasons.

Cliff can be contacted at MAF, Private Bag, Tauranga. Fax (075) 788 429, phone (075) 782 069 work, (075) 758 760 home.

And, yes, the razor really is blunt. Cliff still has his beard!

HONEY FOR SALE?

As mentioned in a previous issue of *Buzzwords*, the NZ Honey Packers Association offers a market information service through its monthly newsletter. In an effort to bring about orderly marketing of honey, beekeepers with honey for sale can advertise the fact in the newsletter. Simply complete the form below and post as directed.

The NZHPA deserves congratulations for this effort. Packers and producers will now have a ready guage of honey available

Please include the following honey for sale in the NZHPA circular for the month of

My name is

Postal address

Phone number Fax number

Honey for sale

Type

<input type="text"/>	kgs	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	kgs	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	kgs	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>		

I enclose payment of \$10.00 (\$5.00 for members of NZHPA)

Signed

Date

Return to the Secretary, Barbara Bixley
NZ Honey Packers Association
PO Box 8016
Hawke's Bay North

Telephone (06) 877 7300
Fax (06) 877 4200

BEE PLANT SEED SOURCE

Ken Franklin of Te Kauwhata wrote to say that as an agent for Watkins Seeds, he is able to supply beekeepers with seeds of annual and some perennial nectar and pollen plants for bees.

Basil, borage, balm, boronia, catnip, chamomile, cleome, heartease, fennel, foxglove, lavender, margoram, meadowfoam, moonflower, sage, savoury, sunflower, thyme and waratahs are all available from him. His address is P O Box 40, Te Kauwhata, or you could ring or fax him on (0817) 63 704.

DEREGULATION IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The *Australasian Beekeeper* recently reported that Western Australia intends to deregulate American Foulbrood control.

Back in the early 1980's, stock inspectors took over the direction of disease control in Western Australia. In the past few years, however, the compensation scheme has gone badly into debt, and disease levels have steadily increased. Now comes a new twist - what with cuts to staff levels and budgets, among other reasons, the number of inspectors available to look after bee diseases has been reduced to 0.6 of a man. Though the beekeeping industry is opposing this reduction, little is being achieved by the opposition at this stage.

The bottom line is that in July, AFB will be deregulated, antibiotics will not be allowed for use in its control, and honey sampling will be undertaken both to check for AFB spores and antibiotic presence.



ACARINE NEWS

A recent Saskatchewan, Canada, beekeepers' newsletter described the final findings of the La Ronge Project. This project had been undertaken to determine the effects of the tracheal mite on honey bees in climatic conditions specific to this part of Canada. If mites were imported with package bees, beekeepers wanted to know how the mites would affect package colony buildup and the survival rate of overwintered colonies.

Though results varied, a common denominator was that over the course of the summer infestations rose and reached levels that would have had an impact during wintering. There was a difference between effects on colonies during the two years of the study. High level infestations during the first year caused extreme aggravation to the colonies and they did not develop well at all. During the second year colony development was improved, but levels of mites still rose in the summer to the point where they would have impacted the colonies during winter.

The conclusion was that tracheal mite infestations continue to rise even though a colony produces a good honey crop and appears to be a strong healthy colony in the autumn. Colonies that have more than a 30 percent infestation going into winter are likely to be severely handicapped or possibly even die during the course of the winter.

Also in the *Saskatchewan News and Views* newsletter was an interesting comment on the US marketing situation.

"Considering the fact that there is virtually no honey remaining in the system in the United States compared a year ago then it is likely that prices will begin to rise ... January-February and the scenario is set for a large price increase".

Sounds good!

CAPSULE FILLER AVAILABLE

Are you interested in producing capsules of healthy bee products for the health food market? Tired of poking pollen pellets into those little gelatine capsules?

Then what you need is a capsule filler. A new product available from the States is suitable for filling both O size and OO size capsules. This little device is only \$US10.00 plus \$US2.00 for shipping. Capsules are also available at \$US8.50 per thousand plus \$US2.00 shipping.

For further information contact Star Products, 511 Simpson Road, Berry Creek, California 95916 USA.

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The views expressed in *Buzzwords* are not necessarily those of the National Beekeepers' Association nor of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

